

**UNITED STATES AND AUSTRALIA: SHARING NATIONAL NUTRITION SURVEY
METHODOLOGY**

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ABSTRACT

SURVEY NET is the computer assisted food coding system developed jointly by United States Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service (USDA-ARS) and the University of Texas-Houston School of Public Health (UTSPH) to code, store, retrieve, review and analyze data from the 1994-96 Continuing Survey of Food Intakes by Individuals (CSFII). The methodologies used in the 1994 CSFII and the format of the food coding and nutrient data bases, which are the driving force of SURVEY NET, make it a suitable program for dietary surveys in other countries. In 1993, Australia recognized the potential use of SURVEY NET in their National Nutrition Survey and obtained permission to receive and adapt it for Australian use. Australia also received the CSFII interviewing and coding manuals. With the help of the UTSPH, Australia adapted SURVEY NET for Australian use and developed the Australian Food and Nutrient Data Base according to the U.S. file formats. In both countries, SURVEY NET, a multi-level system operating from a network, captures detailed information about foods, brand names, recipes, unknown foods, and portion sizes; utilizes the nutrient retention factor recipe methodology; and emphasizes quality control. Inherent differences between countries had to be considered in adapting SURVEY NET: different foods and preparation methods; Imperial system versus the metric system for units of measure; and different consumption styles between countries. The adapted version, referred to as ANSURS, was used in the 1995 National Nutrition Survey in Australia. This collaboration between USDA-ARS and the Commonwealth of Australia benefits both countries by allowing comparability of national food consumption data and survey methodology and by providing a basis for future research between countries.